

Safeguarding Children Policy



Black Firs School

To be reviewed autumn 2020

Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare

“Safeguarding” is an umbrella term encompassing the whole wellbeing of a child and recognises the importance of the preventative agenda. Child Protection is an important component of “safeguarding”.

At Black Firs School we recognise the responsibility we have under Section 175 of the Education and Inspections Act 2002, to have arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

This policy demonstrates the School’s commitment and compliance with safeguarding legislation; it should be read in conjunction with:

- ✓ [Cheshire East Safeguarding Children’s Partnership \(CESCP\) procedures](#)
- ✓ [Safeguarding Children in Education Settings Team \(SCiES\)](#)
- ✓ [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)
- ✓ [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused. 2015](#)
- ✓ [Keeping children Safe in Education 2019](#)
- ✓ [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage” \(April 2017\)](#)
- ✓ [Guidance for Safer Working Practice for staff working in education settings](#). October 2019
- ✓ School e-Safety policy
- ✓ Staff Code of Conduct
- ✓ Mobile Phone Policy
- ✓ [“Preventing and Tackling Bullying” DfE July 2017](#)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals in this School make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that we consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019

No single professional can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Through our day-to-day contact with students and direct work with families, staff take notice of indicators of possible abuse or neglect and refer them to Children’s Services in Cheshire East, CHECs. We recognise that we form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. This responsibility also means that we are aware of the behaviour of staff in the school; we maintain an attitude of ‘*it could happen here*’ where safeguarding is concerned.

Definition

All adults working in education have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children which is defined in the Children Act as: -

- ✓ Protecting children from maltreatment
- ✓ Preventing impairment of children’s health and development
- ✓ Ensuring that children and young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective practice and
- ✓ Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- ✓ Undertaking that role so as to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

This policy is available on our School website and printed copies of this document are available to parents upon request. The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction; alongside our Staff Code of Conduct.

Leadership and Management

This School has identified a clear line of accountability to ensure that staff dealing with child welfare concerns are supported and have access to appropriate training and advice. In this School any individual can contact the following if they have concerns about a young person -

Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection (known as the Designated Child Protection Officer - DCPO)

Martin Casserley (Headteacher)

Peter Woods (DCPO)

Daphne Wright (Deputy Head) will deputise in their absence

Paul Horrocks (Chair Governors) Named School Governor responsible for Safeguarding

**If you have any concerns about a child contact
the Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS)
on ☎ 0300 123 5012 (option 2)
☎ 0300 123 5022 – Emergency Duty Team (Out
of Hours)
✉ checs@cheshireeast.gov.uk
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/checs**

Cheshire East's multi-agency Child Protection Procedures can be found at:
www.online-procedures.co.uk/cheshireeast
This includes a Search engine allowing quick access to information on any
safeguarding issue from Local and national sources.
Cheshire East Local Safeguarding Children Board has its own website at:
www.cheshireeastlscb.org.uk

To go direct to reporting procedures click here [Reporting Procedure](#)

In our School we recognise and ensure that:

- ✓ All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, are treated equally and have equal rights to protection
- ✓ All staff act on concerns or disclosures that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.
- ✓ Students and staff involved in Safeguarding issues receive appropriate support.
- ✓ Staff understand what to do in the event of any allegations against any adult working in the setting
- ✓ We endeavour to provide an environment where children are valued and know that their concerns will be taken seriously.
- ✓ All designated staff are aware of Early Help and ensure that relevant assessments and referrals take place.
- ✓ All staff are aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label; they recognise that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another
- ✓ This policy is available on our school website and printed copies of this document are available to parents upon request.
- ✓ The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction; alongside our Staff Code of Conduct.

In addition, all Staff and Governors are provided with Part One of the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE (updated Sep 2019) and are required to email the Headteacher to indicate that they have read and understood it. The Designated Lead is able to support all staff in understanding their responsibilities and implementing it in their practice.

Purpose of this document:

- ✓ To inform those who work closely with children and their families as to the most common signs of child abuse
- ✓ To provide staff with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and in doing so ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities.
- ✓ To ensure consistent good practice across the School.
- ✓ To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children.
- ✓ To raise awareness of all staff of the need to safeguard all children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- ✓ To emphasise the need for good communication between all members of staff in matters relating to child protection.
- ✓ To promote safe practice and encourage challenge for poor and unsafe practice.
- ✓ To promote effective working relationships with other agencies involved with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, especially with Children's social services and the Police.
- ✓ To ensure that all members of the School community are aware of our procedures for ensuring staff suitability to work with children
- ✓ To ensure that staff understand their responsibility to support children who have suffered abuse in accordance with their agreed plan e.g. Child in Need / Child Protection Plan.

Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including staff, students, Governors, volunteers, parents/carers, visitors, agency staff, or anyone working on behalf of Black Firs School.

This policy is consistent with Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership, CЕСSР, (replaced the LSCB) child protection procedures.

Definitions of terms used in this document

Child Protection: refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children: refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Early Help: means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

Abuse: is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children". Information about the five categories of abuse can be found in [Appendix A](#) below

Staff: refers to all those working for or on behalf of the School or CmaT in either a paid or voluntary capacity, full time or part time. This also includes parents and Governors.

Child: refers to all young people who have not yet reached the age of 18. On the whole, this will apply to children from our own School; however, the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments

Parent: refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role e.g. carers, step-parents, foster parents, and adoptive parents.

Prevention:

Children feel secure in a safe environment in which they can learn and develop. We achieve this by ensuring that:

- ✓ Children develop realistic attitudes to their responsibilities in adult life and are equipped with the skills needed to keep themselves safe; including understanding and recognition of healthy/unhealthy relationships and support available.
- ✓ Children are supported in recognising and managing risks in different situations, including on the internet, being able to judge what kind of physical contact is acceptable and unacceptable, recognising when pressure from others, including people they know, threatens their personal safety and well-being and supporting them in developing effective ways of resisting pressure.
- ✓ All staff are aware of school guidance for their use of mobile technology and have discussed safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks.
- ✓ Importance and prioritisation is given to equipping the children with the skills needed to stay safe; including providing opportunities for Personal, Social and Health Education throughout the curriculum.
- ✓ We ensure that appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place; however, we are careful that “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.
- ✓ All adults feel comfortable and supported to draw safeguarding issues to the attention of the Headteacher and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead and are able to pose safeguarding questions with “respectful uncertainty” as part of their shared responsibility to safeguard children.
- ✓ Emerging themes are proactively addressed and fed back to the local authority and LSCB to ensure a coherent approach so that multi-agency awareness and strategies are developed.
- ✓ There is a proactive approach to substance misuse. Any issues of drugs and substance misuse are recorded
- ✓ We comply with ‘*Working Together to Safeguard Children*’ 2019 and support the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership, CЕСSP, [Timely Support for Children and Families in Cheshire East](#), this document supports professionals to access the right help and support for children and families at the right time.
- ✓ We systematically monitor children’s welfare, keeping accurate records, speaking to parents and notifying appropriate agencies when necessary
- ✓ All staff are aware of children with circumstances which mean that they are more vulnerable to abuse/less able to easily access services and are proactive in recognising and identifying their needs
- ✓ The voice of the child is paramount; therefore, our children are actively involved in safeguarding development.
- ✓ We consult with, listen and respond to children via our School Council meetings, Circle Time, P4C sessions, Clubs and KiVa workshops.
- ✓ We use research evidence to inform our prevention work

Early Help:

All designated staff understand the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership ‘Continuum of Need’ and Child Protection procedures; to ensure that the needs of our children are effectively assessed; decisions are based on a child’s development needs, parenting capacity and family & environmental factors. We ensure that the most appropriate referrals are made. We actively support multi agency planning for these children and, in doing so, provide information from the child’s point of view; bringing their lived experience to life as evidenced by observations or information provided. All staff know how to pass on any concerns no matter how trivial they seem.

Staff members always act in the interests of the child and are aware of their responsibility to take action as outlined in this policy. In our school staff are aware that they must be prepared to identify those children who may benefit from early help. The staff are alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- is a young carer

- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child

If there are concerns about a child's welfare that do not meet the thresholds of child abuse the school will consider whether the Early Help approach should be considered. Staff are aware that early identification of concerns and the use of Early Help to develop a multi-agency plan for the child can reduce the risk of subsequent abuse.

Our School is an Operation Encompass school which means that we are able to give proactive support to those children and their families where Domestic abuse is identified.

Reporting Procedure

The children in our School are made aware that they can speak to any adult if worried or in difficulty.

Our recording procedures are in line with those outlined in Cheshire East's "Recording and Reporting Guidance." 2019; the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Lead are aware of this document.

A member of staff only requires reasonable cause for concern regarding potential child abuse in order to act. Arriving at the point where information and its interpretation give reasonable cause for concern depends upon the source of information. If the information comes from the child, then the teacher should act immediately by taking them to find the Headteacher (Martin Casserley) or the DCPO (Peter Woods). *N.B. One sentence from the child indicating child abuse or non-accidental injury provides you with 'reasonable grounds' and is sufficient for you to act. This may also apply if clear information comes from a sibling or other adult, etc.*

However, considering that many of the signs of child abuse are also commonly associated with other medical, social or psychological problems or simply normal child development a teacher may naturally discuss some initial concerns about a child's mental or physical well-being with other staff, parents, etc.

We recognise that parents may hold key information about incidents / allegations therefore, in the majority of situations; the Designated Safeguarding Lead will speak to the parents and gain their consent to discussing the situation with others. Staff are aware that there will be very few instances where, to speak to the parents, could further endanger the child. In those situations, they would still consult/refer, but would have clearly recorded reasons as to why they had not gained parental consent. They are also aware that, even in situations where the parent does not give consent, the best interests of the child are paramount therefore they would share their concerns.

When there are reasonable grounds to suspect child abuse or non-accidental injury then the following procedure must be implemented immediately:

1. Make a report to the DCPO or Headteacher immediately using the electronic form 'Safeguarding Concerns' which can be found on the Staff Share/School Documents. When a child has reported what amounts to suspected child abuse or non-accidental injury, complete the Form, save it with the child's name and incident date and email it to mcasserley@black-firs.co.uk

Where staff have conversations with a child who discloses abuse they follow the basic principles. Staff should not question the child; other than to respond with TED - **T**ell me what you mean by that, **E**xplain what you mean by that, **D**escribe that. Staff will observe and listen, but do not probe/ask any leading questions.

- ✓ Remember that the priority is to protect the child.

- ✓ Treat the matter seriously.
- ✓ Receive the child's story if appropriate, listen rather than directly question, remain calm, do not judge
- ✓ React to what the child tells you with belief and tell the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- ✓ Indicate to the child what action you will take and make it clear that you will have to inform others (no secrets). Only inform those with a need to know.
- ✓ Keep an accurate record of what you have become aware of and what you have done.
- ✓ Limit any questioning bearing in mind the 'must not' points below.
- ✓ Never stop a child who is recalling significant events
- ✓ Make a record of discussion to include time, place, persons present and what was said (*child's language – do not substitute words*)
- ✓ advise you will have to pass the information on
- ✓ allow time and provide a safe haven / quiet area for future support meetings

Staff must not:

- ✓ Contact the parents again – *this is the job of social services.*
- ✓ Interrogate the child if that child has disclosed information or ask leading questions.
- ✓ Speak to anyone about whom allegations are made (including colleagues).
- ✓ Never take photographs of any injury
- ✓ Never undress a child to physically examine them
- ✓ At no time promise to keep secrets/confidentiality to a child or adult.
- ✓ Avoid coaching/prompting
- ✓ Ask a child outright if they or others have suffered abuse.

The teacher may now withdraw from the immediate process but should remain vigilant.

2. Although any staff member can make a referral, the ideal procedure is via DCPO who should assess all information available to the School about a child and refer to children's social care/consult with ChECS/contact the police if appropriate.

Staff must:

3. If it is necessary for the child to be taken to hospital, (two members of staff must attend) then hand the child over to the direct care of medical staff informing them that non-accidental injury is suspected. Both members of staff must stay with the child (whether the child has been taken to hospital or not) until the social worker arrives.

4. A social worker will arrive either at the School or the Hospital as is appropriate.

The DCPO/Headteacher in collaboration with staff involved in the case must complete a report form, detailing signs observed, action taken and outcomes of contact with other agencies, and send it as soon as possible to:

- i) the appropriate department at the LA;
- ii) Social Services (appropriate Division).

If a parent arrives to collect the child before the social worker has arrived, then the member of staff must remember that he/she has no right to prevent contact between the parents/guardians and the child or to prevent the removal of the child by the parents /guardians. However, if there are clear signs of physical risk or threat, the Police should be immediately contacted and fully informed.

5. The social worker will decide on what action to take and it is the Social Services who must contact the parents/guardians. The DCPO/ Headteacher should inform the member of staff who first reported the concern as to what action has been taken.

Once a strategy for procuring support has been agreed all parties should be kept well informed of developments as appropriate. The following procedures need not necessarily imply that further action is inevitable. It is important, however, in cases of serious concern that there is communication between schools, and the Social Services Department.

6. If staff are still concerned about the child after Social Services have taken action steps or even after a case conference has occurred then they must ask the DCPO / Headteacher to inform the Keyworker, and if necessary request that the case conference be reconvened. If it is felt that the Keyworker has not taken appropriate action, then the Child Protection Plan Custodian should be contacted for advice. Unfortunately, some instances of abuse recur and staff should remain vigilant.

It is important that at all stages in the above procedure staff make detailed written records of all their reports and actions. Before forwarding reports on for further action to take place, it is recommended that staff make and securely retain copies of any notes or reports that they forward. N.B. Notes should be made of the relevant parts of conversations and phone calls, e.g. their general content and 'Who is to do what?' – the notes should be included in reports.

Once you have passed the child into the system withdraw from the process. It is not appropriate to talk to the child or to offer further support. However, when a Child has trusted you enough to disclose, they may feel the desire to return to talk (remember that investigations can sometimes take months). In such a situation tell them that you cannot comment or advise as to do so may affect their security and safety both in the short and long term - **however you can listen!** Any 'discussion' could be misused in court by defence lawyers as evidence against the teacher and the child.

Other options could include referral to specialist services or early help services and should be made in accordance with the referral threshold set by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. In the first instance staff should discuss early help requirements with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If early help is appropriate the designated safeguarding lead will support the staff member in liaising with other agencies and setting up an inter-agency assessment as appropriate.

As staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment; all staff are aware of the relevant assessments and appropriate support is given to them when they undertake an early help assessment.

Where early help and or other support is appropriate we ensure that the case is kept under constant review. If the child's situation doesn't appear to be improving, we take appropriate action.

A consultation will take place with Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) and/or the police immediately. Where a child lives in a different authority the Designated Lead follows the procedures for that authority.

Where possible we ensure that contacts with outside agencies are through the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputies.

Records provide a factual, accurate, evidence-based account. Records are signed, dated and where appropriate, witnessed.

Allegations against School Staff / Handling allegations

Teachers must protect themselves and staff should bear in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued. It is important not to touch children however casually, in ways or on parts of the body that might be considered indecent. This is important for the protection of the member of staff as well as the Child.

Support and advice is sought from Children's Services or the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO), whenever necessary.

At Black Firs School we recognise the possibility that adults working in the School may harm children; that they may have

- ✓ behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- ✓ committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- ✓ behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children

Any concerns of this nature, about the conduct of other adults, should be taken to the Headteacher without delay or, where that is a concern about the Headteacher, to the Chair of Governors and Designated Governor chairgovs@black-firs.co.uk and the LADO. At this stage, after hearing a child's allegation, no discussion should be initiated by school staff with the Headteacher.

Staff are aware that this must be done on the same working day.

The School will not internally investigate until instructed by the LADO.

We make all staff aware of their duty to raise concerns. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels outlined in the policy are open to them.

Advice on answering questions & confidentiality see [Appendix B](#)

Handling of records:

Hard copies of records or reports relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns are scanned, to make an electronic copy, and saved in a secure, confidential cloud based file, stored away from the main student file. The hard copies are then shredded. Authorisation to access these records is controlled by the Headteacher and is only available to Deputy Head & Safeguarding Lead.

The School ensures that safeguarding information, including Child Protection information, is stored and handled in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) ensuring that information is:

- used fairly and lawfully
- for limited, specifically stated purposes
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept for no longer than necessary
- handled according to people's data protection rights
- kept safe and secure

We ensure that information is transferred safely and securely when a student with a Safeguarding Record transfers to another school. We also ensure that Key workers or social workers are notified where a child leaves the school (as appropriate).

Safer Recruitment

The School pays full regard to DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2019 and with reference to the 'Position of Trust' offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003). We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works in the School who is likely to be perceived by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult. We do this by:

- ✓ Operating safe recruitment practices; including highlighting the importance we place on safeguarding children in our recruitment adverts and interview questions, appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and reference checks, verifying identity, academic and vocational qualifications, obtaining professional references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking interviews and checking the Children's List and right to work in England checks in accordance with DBS and Department for Education procedures.
- ✓ Ensuring that staff and volunteers adhere to a published code of conduct and other professional standards at all times, including after school activities. Staff are aware of social media/ on-line conduct.
- ✓ Ensuring that all staff and other adults on site are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationship with students and parents.

- ✓ All staff are required to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting).
- ✓ Maintaining an accurate, complete, up to date Single Central Record.

Staff training and updates:

In our School there is a commitment to the continuous development of all staff, regardless of role with regard to safeguarding training:

All staff undertake Basic Awareness in Safeguarding and child protection training within the first term of their employment/placement. This training is refreshed every 3 years; to enable them to understand and fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

The Designated Lead and Deputies attend CESC multi agency Safeguarding and child protection training on an annual basis.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, and/or Deputy attend the Designated Safeguarding Leads Meetings held each term coordinated by the SCiES Team, therefore enabling them to remain up to date with Safeguarding practices and be aware of any emerging concerns/themes emerging with Cheshire East.

The School acknowledges serious case review findings and shares lessons learned with all staff to ensure no child falls through the gaps.

Cared for children (Looked after children)

In Black Firs School we ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to keep cared for children safe as we aware that children often become looked after as a result of abuse and/or neglect. The Headteacher or Deputy Head are identified as designated teacher for our cared for children; they work closely with the Virtual school from the child's home authority as required.

Children with special needs and disabilities

We ensure that staff have knowledge and understanding of the additional barriers which can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in children with special needs/disabilities.

These barriers can include:

- ✓ assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- ✓ children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by things like bullying - without outwardly showing any signs; and
- ✓ communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers

We aim to build the necessary skills in staff so that they can safeguard and respond to the specific needs of this group of children.

Private Fostering

We recognise that our School has a mandatory duty to report to the local authority when we become aware of, or suspect that, a child is subject to a private fostering arrangement. To aide our awareness we ensure that we establish parental responsibility for each and every child; we take steps to verify the relationship of the adults to the child when we register them.

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more.

A close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.

Parents and private foster carers both have a legal duty to inform the relevant local authority at least six weeks before the arrangement is due to start; not to do so is a criminal offence.

Whilst most privately fostered children are appropriately supported and looked after, we recognise that they are a potentially vulnerable group who should be monitored by the local authority, particularly when the child has come from another country. In some cases, privately fostered children are affected by abuse and neglect, or are involved in trafficking, child sexual exploitation or modern-day slavery.

Where a member of staff becomes aware of private fostering arrangements they are aware that they need to notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then speak to the family of the child involved to check that they are aware of their duty to inform Cheshire East. The School would also inform Cheshire East of the private fostering arrangements.

Children Missing out on Education and Missing from Education

Under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 we have a duty to investigate any unexplained absences especially as a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.

At Black Firs School we follow Cheshire East's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

We also ensure that we are rigorous in our attendance procedures; these are outlined in our attendance policy. Where a child's destination is unknown when they have left our school we ensure we carry out all necessary checks and refer them as children missing education, CME, using the appropriate form so that they can be followed up on. Staff are aware of the trafficking of children and the importance of rigour around our attendance procedures to reduce this as a threat to our children's safety.

The use of 'reasonable force'

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use reasonable force to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'.

Specific safeguarding issues

All staff have an awareness of safeguarding issues. They are aware that these safeguarding issues may not directly involve the child in our school but could be happening to their siblings or parents. They are also aware that some issues could be happening in the lives of staff members.

Staff are supported in accessing and completing the relevant screening tools.

As a listening School staff would pick up on these issues and would know how to identify and respond to:

- Neglect
- Drug/substance/alcohol misuse (*both student and parent*)
- Child sexual exploitation / trafficked children
- Extremism and Radicalisation
- Children missing education
- Domestic abuse
- Peer relationship abuse
- Risky behaviours
- Sexual health needs
- Obesity/malnutrition

- On line grooming
- Inappropriate behaviour of staff towards children
- Bullying, including homophobic, racist, gender and disability.
- Breaches of the Equality Act 2010.
- Self-Harm
- Honour based violence including - Female Genital Mutilation, Beast Ironing, Forced Marriage
- Unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- Trafficking
- Modern Day Slavery

Staff are aware that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children in danger.

Neglect: Apart from being potentially fatal, neglect causes great distress to children and leads to poor outcomes in the short and long-term. Possible consequences include an array of health and mental health problems, difficulties in forming attachment and relationships, lower educational achievements, an increased risk of substance misuse, higher risk of experiencing abuse as well as difficulties in assuming parenting responsibilities later on in life. The degree to which children are affected during their childhood and later in adulthood depends on the type, severity and frequency of the maltreatment and on what support mechanisms and coping strategies were available to the child.

Peer on peer abuse: They know that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to: bullying (including cyber bullying); gender based violence/sexual assaults; sexting; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; initiating/hazing type violence and rituals. Staff are clear on our procedures with regards to peer on peer abuse and do not take it any less serious than adult abuse; we ensure that we apply the same thresholds. Where sexual violence or sexual harassment between children is alleged then the School follows the guidance issued by the DfE in 2018.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly ‘consensual’ relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups.

All Designated staff are alert to possible indicators and will raise concerns as appropriate. They are aware of the pan-Cheshire CSE policy and procedures and of the screening tool including where to find it, how to complete it and what happens next.

Honour Based Violence (HBV) including Forced Marriage (FM): awareness raising has taken place around Honour based violence and forced marriage; they are alert to possible indicators. They are aware that forced marriage is an entirely separate issue from arranged marriage; that it is a human rights abuse and falls within the Crown Prosecution Service definition of domestic violence and that HBV and FM can affect both young men and women.

As a School we would never attempt to intervene directly; where this is suspected we would not speak to the parents before sharing our concerns with ChECS.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): Members of our school community are alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. They have been made aware that FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old. Potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM have been shared and the next steps have been identified, in that we take the same course of action as we would with any form of abuse; the Designated Lead plays a full part in the process of identification recording and reporting. We are mindful that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity is always shown when approaching the subject.

Breast Ironing: Staff have been made aware of an act of abuse performed on young girls (from around the age of 9 years old) in which their breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded, burned with heated objects or covered with an elastic belt to prevent or delay the development of their breasts. Designated staff are clear that they would follow our usual procedure for recording and reporting this abuse where it is suspected.

Domestic abuse/violence: Black Firs School believes that all our children have the right to be safe at school and also in their own homes. We are aware that some children may be living in situations where they are directly or indirectly affected by incidents of domestic abuse or violence. As an Operation Encompass school we are alert to the indicators of abuse and we have a planned approach to supporting children in a proactive way.

Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism: Black Firs School adheres to the Prevent Duty Guidance, July 2015 and seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism and to prevent them being drawn into terrorism; including, but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right / Neo Nazi / White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

The school community has been made aware of the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism; they are also aware that the normalisation of extreme views may make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

In order to raise awareness and reduce risks we ensure that our preventative work is specifically considered, outlined and highlighted in all relevant policies and procedures, including those for the RE and PSHE curriculum, Information technology, Special Educational Needs, attendance, assemblies, the use of school premises by external agencies, behaviour and anti-bullying.

Our taught curriculum includes educating children and young people of how people with extreme views share these with others; we are committed to ensuring that our students are offered a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

In our school community we are aware of these specific issues, relevant to our School's profile.

All staff have received training about the Prevent Duty and tackling extremism.

Black Firs School is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern; therefore concerns need to be recorded and discussed with the DSL; with timely, appropriate action then being taken.

CAF, Child in Need and Child Protection

In our School we ensure that we follow Cheshire East's Multi-Agency Practice Standards to ensure that our work, on behalf of our children, is of a consistently good standard. We use these standards to challenge other workers on behalf of children and young people where the standards are not being met.

Governor Responsibilities

The Governing Body fully recognises its responsibilities with regard to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in accordance with Government guidance.

The Governing Body have agreed processes which allow them to monitor and ensure that the school:

- ✓ Has robust Safeguarding procedures in place.
- ✓ Operates safe recruitment procedures and appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and adults working on the school site.
- ✓ Has procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against any member of staff or adult on site

- ✓ Has a member of the Leadership Team who is designated to take lead responsibility for dealing with Safeguarding and Child Protection issues
- ✓ Takes steps to remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses with regard to Safeguarding arrangements.
- ✓ Is supported by the Governing Body nominating a member responsible for liaising with the LA and/or partner agencies in the event of allegations of abuse against the Headteacher; this is the Chair.
- ✓ Carries out an annual review of the Safeguarding policy and procedures.
- ✓ Carries out an annual Safeguarding Audit in consultation with the Governing body, sharing this with the CЕССР on request.

Conclusion:

Staff in Black Firs School take the safeguarding of each and every child very seriously. This means that, should they have any concerns of a safeguarding nature, they are expected to report, record and take the necessary steps to ensure that the child is safe and protected. This is never an easy action, nor one taken lightly. They are aware that it can lead to challenge from parents/carers, but at all times staff have the child at the heart of all their decisions and act in their best interests.

Further information on our safeguarding and related policy documents and procedures is available on request from the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Safeguarding Contacts sheet:

CHECs – Cheshire East Consultation Service 0300 123 5012 (opt 2) checs@cheshireeast.gov.uk
 SCiES Safeguarding Children in Education settings team – Karen Porter sciesteameast@cheshireeast.gov.uk
 CЕССР – Tracey Walklate
 Safeguarding line manager – Kate Rose
 Supporting children in Domestic Abuse – Tanya Lockwood
 LADO - 01606 288931
 Brook Traffic Light tool (Sexual language)
 E-safety- Liz Stanton, Cheshire Police

Useful Links

www.cheshire.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/children/LSCB
www.nspcc.org.uk
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk
www.ceop.gov.uk
www.teachernet.gov.uk
www.kidscape.org.uk
www.dfe.gov.uk

Appendix A

Five categories of abuse

1. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the physical ill treatment of a child which may or may not result in an injury. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Withholding of care may also be seen to be physical abuse. Physical abuse may also be caused when a parent/relative of carer feigns the symptoms of ill health or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after this is sometimes called fabricating illness and in the past Munchausen’s syndrome by proxy.

Typical signs of Physical Abuse are:-

- Bruises and abrasions - especially about the face, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not be expected to occur given the age of the child. Some types of bruising are particularly characteristic of non-accidental injury especially when the child's explanation does not match the nature of injury or when it appears frequently.
- Slap marks – these may be visible on cheeks or buttocks.

- Twin bruises on either side of the mouth or cheeks - can be caused by pinching or grabbing, sometimes to make a child eat or to stop a child from speaking.
- Bruising on both sides of the ear – this is often caused by grabbing a child that is attempting to run away. It is very painful to be held by the ear, as well as humiliating and this is a common injury.
- Grip marks on arms or trunk - found in babies who are handled roughly or held down in a violent way. Gripping bruises on arm or trunk can be associated with shaking a child. Shaking can cause one of the most serious injuries to a child, i.e. a brain haemorrhage as the brain hits the inside of the skull. X-rays and other tests are required to fully diagnose the effects of shaking. Grip marks can also be indicative of sexual abuse.
- Black eyes - are most commonly caused by an object such as a fist coming into contact with the eye socket. N.B. A heavy bang on the nose however, can cause bruising to spread around the eye but a doctor will be able to tell if this has occurred.
- Damage to the mouth - e.g. bruised/cut lips or torn skin where the upper lip joins the mouth.
- Bite marks.
- Fractures - in children less than 2 years.
- Poisoning and other misuse of drugs - e.g. overuse of sedatives.
- Burns and/or scalds - a round red burn on tender, non-protruding parts like the mouth, inside arms and on the genitals will almost certainly have been deliberately inflicted. Any burns that appear to be cigarette burns should be cause for concern. Some types of scalds known as 'dipping scalds' are always cause for concern. An experienced person will notice skin splashes caused when a child accidentally knocks over a hot cup of tea. In contrast a child who has been deliberately 'dipped' in a hot bath will not have splash marks.

2. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse of a child involves forcing or enticing a child to participate in sexual activities, including prostitution whether or not the child is aware of what is happening or not. Sexual abuse includes: Physical contact, including penetrative eg rape, buggery, oral sex or non-penetrative acts, non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of pornographic or online sexual materials or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Typical signs of Sexual Abuse are:

- A detailed sexual knowledge inappropriate to the age of the child.
- Behaviour that is excessively affectionate or sexual towards other children or adults.
- Attempts to inform by making a disclosure about the sexual abuse often begin by the initial sharing of limited information with an adult. It is also very characteristic of such children that they have an excessive pre-occupation with secrecy and try to bind the adults to secrecy or confidentiality.
- A fear of medical examinations.
- A fear of being alone – this applies to friends/family/neighbours/baby-sitters, etc.
- A sudden loss of appetite, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa.
- Excessive masturbation is especially worrying when it takes place in public.
- Promiscuity.
- Unusually explicit or detailed sex play in young children.
- Sexual approaches or assaults - on other children or adults.
- Pregnancy, urinary tract infections (UTI), sexually transmitted disease (STD) are all cause for immediate concern in young children, or in adolescents if his/her partner cannot be identified.
- Bruising to the breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen, thighs and genital/rectal areas. Bruises may be confined to grip marks where a child has been held so that sexual abuse can take place.
- Discomfort or pain particularly in the genital or anal areas.
- The drawing of pornographic or sexually explicit images.

3. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's development. Emotional abuse can involve: conveying an opinion that the child is worthless or unloved valuable only when they meet the needs of another person, and age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child, including overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interactions.

It may involve serious bullying causing them to feel frequently frightened or in danger. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another, and/or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it can occur alone.

4. Physical Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical and psychological needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Neglect may involve: failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing (including exclusion from home or abandonment) and failing to protect from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, failure to follow prescribed treatment/therapy plans, failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers) as well as neglect of a child's basic emotional needs (love and security, praise and recognition, intellectual stimulation and development)

- Underweight – a child may be frequently hungry or pre-occupied with food or in the habit of stealing food or with the intention of procuring food. There is particular cause for concern where a persistently underweight child gains weight when away from home, for example, when in hospital or on a school trip. Some children also lose weight or fail to gain weight during school holidays when school lunches are not available and this is a cause for concern.

- Inadequately clad - a distinction needs to be made between situations where children are inadequately clad, dirty or smelly because they come from homes where neatness and cleanliness are unimportant and those where the lack of care is preventing the child from thriving.

Physical Neglect is a difficult category because it involves the making of a judgement about the seriousness of the degree of neglect.

Much parenting falls short of the ideal but it may be appropriate to invoke child protection procedures in the case of neglect where the child's development is being adversely affected.

5. Grave Concern/at risk

This is not a separate category of child abuse as such but covers a number of situations where a child may be at risk that is children whose situations do not currently fit the above categories but where social and medical assessments indicate that they are at significant risk of abuse. Grave concern may be felt where a child shows symptoms of stress and distress (see below) and any of the following circumstances apply:

- there is a known child abuser in the family;
- another child in the family is known to have been abused;
- the parents are involved with pornographic material to an unusual degree;
- there is an adult in the family with a history of violent behaviour.

Appendix B

ADVICE, ANSWERING QUESTIONS & CONFIDENTIALITY

Ensure that children feel that they are listened to but in the instance of Explicit Questions we cannot enter into dialogue where a personal opinion may be expressed.

It is inappropriate to deal with a Child's explicit questions by dealing with it in front of the whole class, e.g. questions on sex. In practice this means that teachers have to say 'I'm sorry I'm not allowed to answer that question, can we talk about it later'. The teacher would pass this on to the CPO who may deem it appropriate to discuss the child's concerns with the parents - a decision may then be taken on how best to deal with it. In all cases of explicit questions being asked by a child to a member of staff, abuse should only be suspected when the questions are totally inappropriate to the age of the child.

Confidentiality

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential
- The DCPO and/or Head teacher will only disclose information about a Child to other members of staff on a need to know basis.
- All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children
- All staff must be aware that they cannot make a promise

Having considered all available advice and guidance, the Governors, DCPO and Headteacher state that in circumstances where a Child is considered at some risk of any type of abuse (e.g. sexual or physical) or in breach of the law, the teacher must refer this to the DCPO / Headteacher in compliance with the LA procedures for Child Protection. The DCPO / Headteacher will decide whether to inform the parents and/or appropriate authorities and may arrange for counselling as appropriate. Although there is no legal duty on a teacher, or a DCPO / Headteacher to inform parents of matters which a child has confided to them:

- teachers must not promise confidentiality even though they cannot be made to break it once given;
- children must be made aware that any incident may be conveyed to the DCPO / Headteacher and possibly to parents;
- teachers must use their professional judgement and take into account the School's Child Protection Policy to decide whether confidence can be maintained having heard the information;
- teachers must indicate clearly to children when the content of a conversation can no longer be kept confidential - the Child can then decide whether to proceed or not. When the content of the conversation indicates the possibility of child abuse, the teacher must pass that information onto the DCPO /Headteacher in accordance with the school policy on Child Protection.